

The Brethren Evangelist.

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CONSULTING THE RECORDS.

At the elbow of the manager of every large business firm lies a record of every man's financial responsibility and commercial honesty. As we have observed the constant use of these books our minds were carried forward to the eternal Judgment, when "the book" shall be opened.

Business men give very little thought to the "ratings" their transactions are making for them; but the well organized commercial agency is recording each step as it is taken whether it be forward or backward.

So it is with the deeds done in the body: God's recording angel is filling up the book. Even idle thoughts, and cups of cold water are entered in each one's life account.

But the point of comparison most striking is the carefulness of the business man to consult his "Bradstreet" or "Dunn" before committing himself to any important transaction. How necessary then that the Christian do likewise: he has a far more reliable guide—the "sure word of prophecy," and then his acts commit him to results infinitely more important.

The Christian has two sources from which to look for guidance and help: the inspired word of God and the Holy Spirit.

The business man who avails himself even of such guides as are at his command does not often come to financial grief, but the man of God who "searches the scriptures" in the light of the Holy Spirit always comes out right with God.

If we had our readers before us we would like to ask all who look to God for guidance in *every thing* they undertake to "raise hands." Our guess is that not more than one in a thousand would go up. This accounts for the numerous backslidings, and the low ebb of spiritual life at which the mass of Christians live.

Not to look to God constantly and listen attentively for his answer is to live in spiritual blindness and deafness. Here is work for pastors. First, they should get right themselves, and then lead their flocks into

the "green pastures" of God's wisdom, power and love.

If such a course as this were pursued doctrine, discipline, finances, and all lines of church work would adjust themselves to the true standard. Then would soon come the fulfillment of the prophecy that a nation shall be born in a day. Instead of scrofulous, consumed, neuralgic, bilious, dyspeptic, sour faced libels on Christianity we would have clean, full chested, large hearted, strong muscled, nimble limbed, clear skinned, sweet faced souls whose lives could no more be hid than a city upon a hill, or a candle upon a candle stick.

May God inspire us all to consult His Word and His Spirit for guidance in all the details of our lives.

QUERY BOX.

EDITH EVANGELIST:—I wish to ask for my benefit, and for others as well who may be anxious to hear them answered, the following questions which I think are in place:

- I. What is strictly a Congregational Church?
- II. What is its judiciary and legislative limit in local churches, and National Conferences?
- III. Who is a regular ordained minister according to the law of our country? Define his judicial power?
- IV. Who is a deacon, and what is his work?
- V. Define the work of a minister, not a deacon?
- VI. Define the work and power of an Elder?
- VII. Who is an Evangelist?
- VIII. Have we a right to invite men into the Brethren Church and tell them the church accepts men of secret societies? Whose law do we offend, if any?
- IX. What is the average expense of our National Conferences?
- X. Do our publishing houses pay a dividend to the church? if so who gets it?

I hope these questions will be received with Christian courtesy and answered in full. I am as ever.

J. H. PALMER.

Huntington, Ind.

1.

Answer. A congregational church is one which transacts all of its own business and recognizes no *authority* outside of itself.

2.

Answer. Its judiciary and legislative limit are its own members in each congregation. National conference has no judicial or legislative power.

3.

Answer. He is an ordained minister in the eyes of the law who performs all the functions of the ministry as defined by the church of which he is a member without restriction or limitation. He has no judicial power.

4.

Answer. A Deacon is one who has been elected by the congregation where he holds his membership to attend especially to the secular affairs of the church, and to the spiritual so far as circumstances may enable and

require. He may properly perform all the duties of the ministry save the laying on of hands, organizing of churches and the ordaining of officers.

5.

Answer. The work of the minister is especially to teach, preach, exhort, reprove and rebuke publicly and privately; to visit those who are poor or sick either temporally or spiritually; to warn the trespasser, hold up the weak and cheer the disconsolate.

6.

Answer. An Elder differs from a minister in two points: (a) He must be an "ordained" minister. (b) He is the official head of the church in the absence of the pastor.

7.

Answer. The term Evangelist as applied to ministers in contradistinction with pastor means one who travels from place to place preaching.

8.

Answer. There are comparatively few congregations of Brethren where membership in secret societies is made a test of fellowship. Hence the truth is, the Brethren church does accept men who are identified with secret societies. The church has no law but God's; therefore whatever offence is committed is against his law.

9.

Answer. If by "expense" is meant the cost of transportation, boarding, etc., no one can give any thing but approximate figures. We would say between \$1,000 and \$2,000.

10.

Answer. The Publishing House is in debt and is a very small plant, and will not likely pay a dividend inside of ten years. If it had any thing to pay, it would go to the stockholders.

We may not have answered the questions Brother Palmer meant to ask; and further realize our fallibility even if we have understood the questions.

Write a card to "The Brethren Publishing House," and tell us when you will reach Ashland, how many days you want to stay, your preference of a place to board and lodge, and we will make arrangements for your entertainment.

Here are the special rates for the conference delegates.—The two first class hotels will charge \$1.50 for room and board, or two or more occupying one room, \$1.00 per day for room and board. At the boarding hall you will be asked to pay twenty-five cents each for the use of a furnished room for one night, and you can then retain the room during conference without any further charge. Meals at boarding hall will be twenty-five cents each, or a five meal ticket for \$1.00. Board and lodging in private families seventy-five cts. per day. The members of the Ashland city church will accommodate all they can free of charge.